

Letter from Taizé

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Letter for 1990 Wellsprings of trust

This letter, "Wellsprings of Trust" has been translated into thirty languages. It was written by Brother Roger to be read over and meditated in **Taizé** during the

40 weeks
of intercontinental
meetings

which will bring together young adults from thirty-five to sixty nations at a time, from 4 February to 11 November 1990. To get the greatest benefit from this letter, it should not be read quickly, but should be meditated upon slowly. It was made public during the European Meeting which brought together 50,000 young people from the whole of Europe in **Poland** (Wrocław 28 Dec.1989 - 2 Jan.1990)

At the end of the European Meeting, Brother Roger went to **Roumania**, to pray in churches there and to discover what it is possible to do straightaway.

If everything began with a heart that trusts, who would continue to say, "What am I doing on this earth?"

Across the world, so many young people, so many women, men and also children, have all they need for the transformation of situations frozen into immobility.¹ Leaving behind the time of mistrust, or even suspicion, they have all they need to create an era of trust and of reconciliations.

For them, although there are walls to be demolished, there is above all a "unique wellspring"² where new energy can be found again and again.

As you go to draw from that spring, you sometimes say: faith, trust in God, is almost inaccessible to me. ▶

¹ A good many years ago, in 1979, I was invited to Poland, to speak during a pilgrimage of mine workers at Plekary, in Silesia. I said to them, "Perhaps not one of you, Polish workers, thinks he has any influence on the development of the human race. But the contrary is true. It is not those who appear to be in the front ranks who bring about change in the world. Look at the Virgin Mary. Neither did she think that her life was essential for the future of the human family. Like her, you are the humble ones of this world who are preparing the ways that lead to a future for many. Your faithful waiting upon God is carrying forward many others across the earth."

² This "unique wellspring" is the Risen Christ. Without him, would we not run the risk of coming to a standstill, of ceasing to follow the road that should lead us to the encounter of Eternity?

Dear Brother Roger,

On the eve of this new stage in the "pilgrimage of trust on earth" represented by the European meeting of young people organized by the Taizé Community in Wrocław from 28 December to 2 January, I would like to extend my warmest wishes to you. In this crucial year in the history of the continent, I greet the tens of thousands of young adults who have come from the East and the West to unite their prayers and to reaffirm their faith in a world of solidarity, open to reconciliation. Their efforts in favour of peace are a great comfort to all those who, at the United Nations, are working in this direction. Once again, I ask you, Brother Roger, to transmit to them my sincere thanks for their precious support.

Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary General of the United Nations

A MESSAGE
FROM THE
SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE
UNITED NATIONS

What will enable you to discover the brightness of the spring, where the Gospel becomes visible in its original freshness?

You may have already noticed that, in the depths of the human condition, there lies the longing for a presence, the silent desire for a communion. Know that this simple desire for God is already the beginning of faith.³

At the outset, extensive knowledge is not what matters. This has its value. But you understand the Mystery of Faith first and foremost with your heart.⁴ Knowledge will come later. All is not given at once.

If Christ had not come to earth, God could still seem to you to be far away, and even out of reach. Will you remember for all time a Gospel reality that flashes through your night: "This is love: we are not the ones who loved God; God loved us first"?⁵ Yes, God is love – God loves each person as an only child, and Christ, the Risen Lord, comes to make God accessible to our lives.⁶

However inconceivable it may seem, when you abandon yourself to him, when you let him love you, don't worry if you are not able to love him immediately.⁷

Already you understand his words: "Without looking back, follow me."⁸

In the Gospel, Jesus assures you that by worrying, you can accomplish nothing.⁹ The important thing is consenting to your limits, your frailties, and not trying to weed them out.¹⁰ When you look back, you are already lingering over what hurts you, both in yourself and in others.¹¹

Jesus the Christ does not invite you to withdraw into yourself, but rather to a humble repentance of heart. And what does this mean? It is that movement of trust by which you cast your faults on him.¹² And then you are released, and even liberated, so that you can live in the present moment.

³ A great many people feel that their own faith is quite weak. In the Gospel, Christ invites us not to be distressed by this. The realities of God cannot be measured, and the tiny mustard seed will grow into a large tree (Luke 17,5 and Matthew 13,31-32).

⁴ The heart here stands for the depths, and even the centre, of the human being.

⁵ 1 John 4,10.19.

⁶ John Paul II wrote in his first encyclical letter that, in some sense, Christ is united to every human being without exception.

⁷ When we let God love us, gradually we become able to love in our turn. "Someone asked Jesus, «Of all the commandments, which is the most important?» «The most important one,» answered Jesus, «is this: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these»" (Mark 12,28-31).

⁸ In the Gospel, the calls of Jesus to follow him without delay, without looking back, are crystal clear. To Peter, Jesus said, "You, follow me!" (John 21,22). To Zacchaeus: "Come down immediately; I must stay at your house today" (Luke 19,5). "Jesus said to Peter and Andrew, «Come, follow me»... At once they left their nets and followed him" (Mark 1,17-18). "Someone said to Jesus, «I will follow you, Lord, but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family.» Jesus replied, «No one who puts their hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the Kingdom of God»" (Luke 9,61-62).

⁹ "Who of you, by worrying, can add a single hour to their life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?" (Luke 12,25-26).

¹⁰ Matthew 13,24-30.

11 Fixing our eyes on the light of Christ enables us to consent even to what we do not appreciate about ourselves, to accept it without wasting time over it. And the day may come when what used to bother us about ourselves will seem unimportant. When we refuse to admit to ourselves what we do not like in ourselves, we are fighting a lost battle. Wallowing in self-pity is a dead-end street. When we linger in the shadows, our soul is imprisoned, we move forward all bent over, lacking a vital hope.

12 Received in a spirit of repentance, the sacrament of reconciliation provides the personal certainty of God's forgiveness.

13 Several centuries before Christ, the prophet Jeremiah discovered that human beings were incapable of fulfilling God's will as long as it remained only an outward law written on tablets of stone. And he announced this promise from God: "I will put my law in the depths of their being and write it on their hearts" (Jer 31,33). And Ezekiel added: "I will place my spirit in you" (Ezek 36,27). Since the coming of Christ, believers themselves are like "a letter from Christ, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts" (2 Cor 3,3).

14 "Christ will appear to each person as if he were fixing his gaze on that person alone, speaking to them, welcoming them. No one will be sad, thinking that Christ did not know them or that Christ neglected them" (Saint Symeon, 10th-11th centuries).

Perhaps you say, "That's not possible." But you will realize that, even when trials arise, the fabric of your life is already interwoven with the threads of God's forgiveness. Remember once and for all: God never imposes himself by acts of will that threaten.

When you are harassed by waves of pessimism that make war on the soul, why pay attention to them? If your faith was founded on torment, you would be building your house on sand.

God's will is love, and love alone; henceforth the good news is engraved in the depths of the human heart.¹³

The Risen Christ is alongside you. And a kind of inner voice rises up in you, and that voice is prayer. If your mouth remains shut, your silent heart listens, wide open before God.

When you use words to pray, they are sometimes poor and clumsy. You tell God your joys, your disappointments, everything. When praying alone, the language you use is not important; nobody will be disconcerted or shocked by it.

And Christ challenges you through events as well. He suggests questions, an intuition, that arise from the depths and keep working within you. Even if you only recall a single word, that word can open for you a way forward.

Within you this prayer:

"Saviour of every life, the days passed and I did not respond to you. I was even at the point of asking myself: do I really need God? Walls of hesitation and doubt rose up, causing me to drift far from you.

"Jesus Christ, mysterious Presence, you waited for me.¹⁴ At the heart of my contradictions, and even of my inner revolts, I glimpsed once again that luminous Gospel insight: your love is not an empty word; it is your constant presence, your trust, your forgiveness. ▷

"I realized that, by the Holy Spirit, you, the Risen Lord, were alive in me and had never left me. You loved me before I loved you."¹⁵

"Returning to the living spring, I am ready to say and to repeat to you a yes for always, the yes of the Virgin Mary.¹⁶ A light will shine, and a new day dawn in my heart.¹⁷ I shall hear you calling over and over again: without waiting, follow me!"

Perhaps you could place on the wall of your home these Gospel words straight from the heart of God: "Whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do for me, Christ!"¹⁸

The presence of a little child can open your eyes,¹⁹ making you more attentive to the suffering of the innocent, to those who are contending with broken relationships, with unbearable loneliness.²⁰

A communion in Christ gives you the audacity for strong solidarities so that, across the earth, the most deprived are not forgotten.²¹

Those who share their possessions are always led to simplify their lives.²² And then, even with very little, your inventive imagination will find ways of creating beauty in and around you. Let a joy sing out within you, the radiant gift of creation; your eyes discern in it reflections of eternity.

Refusing to look back, and joyful with infinite gratitude, never fear to rise to meet the dawn, praising and singing Christ, your Lord.²³

Perhaps you will ask me: but how can I approach the wellsprings of trust and reconciliation? Where can I find a burning love that reconciles? Where? Could it lie in forgiving and forgiving yet again,²⁴ and also in understanding with a total lack of bias?

When you decide to put an end to a break in a relationship, if you go to encounter those opposed to

¹⁵ The Old Testament already helps us to understand God's love for each person. God says to each one, "You are precious in my sight and I love you" (Isaiah 43,4). In the New Testament, this spark bursts into flame. John the apostle expresses it in words of utter clarity. For him, love is the very definition of God. He says it in three words: "God is love." Then he explains what this love is: "This is love: not that we loved God but that God loved us... we must love, since God loved us first" (1 John 4,10.19). If Christ had not come to earth, if the apostles had not written down what they had seen and heard of Christ, or if their writings had been lost and had not come down to us, how would we have found the way?

¹⁶ Luke 1,38.

¹⁷ This dawn is the dawning of the light of Christ. "You will do well to pay attention to it," writes the apostle Peter, "as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts" (2 Peter 1,19).

¹⁸ Matthew 25,40.

¹⁹ The presence of children is so essential (Luke 9,46-48). Who will tell all that some children can communicate through gifts still unknown to them and yet already placed in them by the Holy Spirit? There are children who awaken other people to God by the trust they show, by unexpected words.

²⁰ The suffering of the innocent does not come from God. One day, the prophet Elijah was called to go to Mount Sinai to listen to God. A hurricane broke forth, followed by an earthquake, then a violent fire. But Elijah understood that God was not in these outbursts of nature (1 Kings 19). Then, everything became quiet and Elijah heard God in a whisper. He became aware of this astonishing reality: often we perceive God's voice in our depths through a murmur of silence. Perhaps this was one of the first times in history that such a clear intuition was written down: God does not impose himself through violence; God does not express himself through powerful means that frighten people. Today like yesterday, God is not the author of wars, of catastrophes, of misfortunes. But, by his Holy Spirit, the Risen Christ remains alongside all who are undergoing trials; he is there in the midst of human suffering by his compassionate presence.

²¹ Regarding human solidarities, when I was received on two occasions together with children from the five continents by Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, the Secretary General of the United Nations, we were able to share with him some of the basic hopes of people today.

²² Many Christians, even with minimal resources, express a solidarity with those who are far away as well as with those near at hand. The desire to live out human solidarities to make the earth fit to live in is a sign of authenticity. And authenticity is one of the main aspirations of many young people today. But let no one worry: there are different ways of giving the best of what we have. Why should an elderly person, someone who is ill, the mother of a family with a lot to do, be anxious and say, "I'm not doing anything to make the earth a better place!" They should never forget that their prayer comes down from God and will never return to God without having an effect on this earth.

²³ Among those who rise to meet the dawn are the believers who have gone before us and who pray with us, from the Virgin Mary and the apostles to those of the present day.

24 "Peter asked Jesus, «How many times must I forgive my brother if he injures me? As many as seven times?» «Not seven times,» replied Jesus, «but seventy-seven times.» (Matthew 18,21-22).

25 The Gospel invites us to adopt the following attitude when we ourselves are rejected or humiliated: "Love your enemies; pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5,44). But when it is a question of another person, when someone else is mistreated or suffers discrimination, we of course wish to do all we can to come to their aid.

26 1 Peter 2,22-25.

27 It is hard to imagine how Christ would have come to earth to start a religion. Christ is communion, and thus renders accessible that unique communion in his Body which is the Church, ferment of love in the entire human family.

28 Why do we long so deeply for a reconciliation in that mystery of communion which is the Church? If the Church were just a human society, its divisions would not matter so much. But the Church is Christ in his communion, present on earth. We are captivated when Christians make love for Christ credible. We are captivated when Christians, reconciled by love, are everywhere ferments of peace and trust. If we only love those who love us, we are doing nothing special (Matthew 5,46). There is no need to have faith to do that; are not non-believers able to do as much?

29 Matthew 3,3.

30 "I know your afflictions and your poverty — yet you are filled to overflowing... Remain faithful until death" (Rev 2,9-10). "If you wish to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for trials. Fashion a steadfast heart; be bold; have no fear in the hour of adversity" (Sirach 2,2). Building ourselves up inwardly in the Risen Christ means coming back to a few essential realities of the Gospel, day after day, all our life long. The following prayers could help create an inner unity:

Morning

Jesus the Christ, Inner Light, give me the gift of welcoming your love, so that joy may be mine. I love you, not as I would like to, but I do love you.

Noon

Bless us, Lord Christ, us and those whom you have confided to us.... Keep us in the spirit of the Beatitudes: joy, simplicity, mercy.

Evening

Holy Spirit, Spirit of the Risen Christ, you fill us with your continual presence; come and quench our thirst for trust, for peace, for forgiveness, to the point that the wellsprings of jubilation never run dry.

Or else later in the evening
God of Eternity, Saviour of all life, in the footsteps of your witnesses of all the ages, from the time of Mary and the apostles, enable me to dispose myself inwardly to place my trust in the Mystery of Faith.

you and tell them, "I have come to be reconciled," and if they reply "out of the question; go away," what will you do? Will your heart be overcome by hatred?

You know the Gospel: Jesus Christ calls us to love and to pray for those who hurt us. Our heart finds peace once more when, after having been rejected and humiliated, we entrust to God, without waiting a single moment, those who have wounded us.²⁵

Are you aware that we follow a Christ who, overwhelmed by suffering, never threatened anyone?²⁶ He comes to bring healing by his compassion. This Christ is communion.²⁷ He places you in that mystery of communion which is his Body, his Church: there, the living springs of reconciliation will be accessible to you.²⁸

Without this unique communion, how would the light of Christ have been passed down through the ages, from Mary and the apostles to the present day? Christians have always prepared the ways of Christ,²⁹ communicating to others the trust of faith. And today, are you among those who, with perseverance, continue to open the paths of the Risen Christ?

Happy those who remain open to compassion! By the Holy Spirit, the Risen Christ reawakens in you a longing for the miracle of his presence. Will you fashion a steadfast heart to be faithful to the end?³⁰ Or will you hesitate, saying, "Why do you ask me to prepare the ways of the Gospel for others? Can't you see that I'm at a loss, like a child?"

Happy those who remain open to compassion! On account of Christ and the Gospel, will you dare an outburst of audacity? Setting aside the worry that isolates you and does not come from God, will you return with a heart that trusts to those who have rejected you and tell them again, "I have come to be reconciled"?

If they were to drive you away with harshness — what a discovery! — yes, you have already welcomed them within yourself. However astonishing it may be, when you run the risk of trusting, in you a peace of heart wells up, the incredible lightness of a joy. □

• From Pope JOHN PAUL II

To Brother Roger of Taizé

Hearing that this year you are holding the European Youth Meeting in Wrocław, in his native land, the Holy Father joins you through prayer and he encourages the participants to seek in the Risen Christ the wellspring of all communion and of all reconciliation. May the Lord guide their way towards him. May the young people discover more and more his presence in their lives and work for the building up of a world where human solidarity will be stronger. This is the Pope's wish in this Christmas season where God became a human being so that human beings might be saved. As he wishes you a good and holy year in 1990, he asks the Lord to bless each one of the young people meeting in Wrocław.

• From the Prime Minister of POLAND

Dear young friends,
In the name of the government of this country, I welcome to Poland all the participants in the 11th European Meeting. This splendid and moving meeting, with more than 50,000 young people, in this place and at this time in the history of Europe is a confirmation of the hope which is arising for our continent and for the whole world.

Despite my sincere desire to do so, I cannot come to take part personally in your meeting. I am united to you in prayer and in searching in order to go to "the wellsprings of inner life and to make the earth habitable for all", as says the fine phrase so often used by the Taizé Community. I am convinced that this value, which belongs to the whole of humanity and which is the basis of the "Pilgrimage of trust on earth", unites all people, irrespective of their opinions, their nationality or their age.

I wish that you may be able to reach the "wellsprings of trust" of which Brother Roger writes with such conviction. I am sure the meeting in Wrocław will give you unforgettable experiences and that many lasting friendships will be formed. At the beginning of 1990, I wish, for you and for us all, that Europeans will know how to rise above artificial divisions for the realization of a common Europe, founded on Christian values, to come closer.

Tadeusz Mazowiecki
Prime minister of the Polish Republic
30th December 1989

Messages sent to the European Meeting in Poland

• from CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Very warm greetings to the Taizé Community and to all the young participants in the European Meeting in Wrocław.

The President of the Czechoslovak Republic, Vaclav Havel
The President of parliament, Alexander Dubcek

With admiration and thanks to Brother Roger, to the Taizé Community and also to Cardinal Gulbinowicz, for it being possible to hold the European Meeting in Poland. May our future hold out freedom and justice, and may ideals of solidarity become reality thanks to the young people who are taking part in the meeting.

Cardinal Tomasek,
Archbishop of Prague, Primate of Czechoslovakia

• From a national meeting of young Christians in India :

We the youth and animators from all over India, gathered at Bassein, Bombay, send the dear young people of Europe gathered at the European Meeting at Wrocław in Poland our warm greetings and prayerful wishes. We are with you in communion of prayer in our common struggle for total freedom and search for wellsprings of trust.

From young Chileans to the meeting in Poland: With much affection, here is our greeting from Chile. We are living here with much hope and many signs of the presence of the Lord Jesus; it is a time of great joy and fraternity. In Europe, you are seeing a time when walls are crumbling and when young people from different places in the world are offering each other their hands in prayer and friendship. May the God of peace, of joy, of strength and hope, continue to give himself, so that we can learn to make the earth habitable for all and to live out together a parable of communion and a pilgrimage of trust.

N Meeting for the young people of Northern Europe

24 - 27 May 1990

Linköping, Sweden

For the first time, a stage of the Pilgrimage of trust will take place in the north of Europe, in Sweden. Young people from all the neighbouring countries, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Russia, the Baltic States, will be welcomed by the people of Linköping. The meeting starts on Ascension Day, Thursday 24th May, and ends on Sunday 27th May. In the morning, there will be meetings in the parishes. Midday and evening prayers will be held in the cathedral.

Information and registration to participate in the meeting:

- Travel from BRITAIN: Boat to Gothenburg leaves Harwich, 23rd May at 14.45 returns 28th May at 16.00. Cheap "Seapex" return fare: £99 (has to be booked at least 4 weeks in advance), student reductions also available: Scandinavian Seaways, Scandinavia House, Parkstone Quay, Harwich, Essex, CO12 4QG. Tel: 0255 240240. Then coach or train to Linköping. All further information via Stephen & Jean Nicholson, 50 Beverley Close, Rainham, GILLINGHAM, Kent, ME8 9HQ. Tel: 0634 364101.

- From OTHER COUNTRIES: Taizé Community, 71250 CLUNY, France. Tel: 85.50.18.18

Letter from Taizé

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Correspondence:

Letter from Taizé, 71250 Taizé-Communauté, France

Johannine hours

Mathew 26,36-46

Johannine hours are suggested as a way of seeking God in silence and prayer, in the midst of our life at home. During the course of the day take a couple of hours to read the Bible passage with the short commentary and to reflect on the questions which follow. Afterwards, the group (3 to 10 people) meet together to share what they have discovered and perhaps for a time of prayer.

At the beginning of the sombre events leading to the death of Jesus, the gospel writers give us a glimpse of his inner combat. There, even before he falls into the hands of his enemies, the essential of his redemptive work is played out. Jesus gives his life freely, before Pilate's soldiers take him by force, but first he has to experience in his very flesh what the authentic use of freedom entails (cf. Heb 5,8). In this way, in his human existence, he reveals to us God's love in its most personal dimension.

In the solitude of Gethsemane, Jesus is confronted by the immensity of evil, the refusal of light and communion, as something he has to pass through. He experiences the horror of this, and an extreme aversion which has less to do with his human weakness than with the incompatibility between evil and the God of goodness and life. He takes up into his relationship with the Father the tormenting question of the just person who is being persecuted: "How is it possible for the way of the Lord to pass through the dark night of evil?"

Jesus finds a way out of this seemingly hopeless situation by an act of trust made in utter darkness. This trust expresses a certainty: God is still his Abba, his loving Father, who wants what is best for him and for the world; he is never the author or the accomplice of evil. God's will is thus a source of life, even when this seems to be belied by appearances. Jesus' yes to this will, a yes that is totally poor yet rooted in filial trust, opens a space for the love of God in the midst of the weaknesses of the human condition—and its refusals—in order to make healing possible.

● In what way does Christ's attitude on the Mount of Olives help me to cope with moments of trial and doubt in my life? How can we wake from our sleep in order to "watch and pray" with Christ?

Meditating on the Word

1 Thu Jr 4.1-4
Jesus said: Whoever wants to be a follower of mine must renounce themselves and take up their cross and follow me. **Lk 9.22-25**

2 Fri Mt 9.14-15
Thus says the Lord: Is that the sort of fast that pleases me: hanging your head like a bending reed? Is not rather this the fast that pleases me: breaking unjust fetters, setting free the oppressed and sharing your food with the hungry? **Is 58.5-9a**

3 Sat Lk 5.27-32
If you do away with the accusing finger and malicious talk, if you give what is yours for the hungry, then your light will rise in the darkness and your darkest hour will be like the middle of the day. **Is 58.9b-12**

4 SUN Rm 5.12-19
Jesus said to the tempter: Away with you! For Scripture says, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone." **Mt 4.1-11**

5 Mon Mt 25.34-40
The Lord says: I watch over my Word to see it fulfilled. **Jr 1.11-19**

6 Tue Mt 6.7-14
The Lord says: As the rain and the snow come down from the sky and do not return before having watered the earth and made it fertile, so is it with the word that goes out from my mouth: it will not return to me before having achieved its purpose. **Is 55.10-11**

7 Wed Jr 2.1-5
Jesus said: My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and put it into practice. **Lk 8.19-21**

8 Thu Jr 2.10-13
Jesus said: Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. **Mt 7.7-11**

9 Fri Ezk 18.21-23
Jesus said: If you are bringing you offering to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and then come back and present your offering. **Mt 5.20-24**

10 Sat Dt 26.16-19
Jesus said: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. **Mt 5.43-48**

11 SUN Gn 12.1-4
On the mountain of the Transfiguration a bright cloud covered the disciples and a voice said: This is my beloved Son, on whom my favour rests; listen to him. **Mt 17.1-9**

12 Mon Jr 3.12-17
Jesus said: Give, and it will be given to you. A full measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For the measure you use will be the measure used for you. **Lk 6.36-38**

13 Tue Mt 20.20-28
The Lord says: Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. **Is 1.16-18**

14 Wed Jr 18.18-20
Coming to his senses, the prodigal son said: I will leave this place and go to my Father and say, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son." But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him. **Lk 15.1-3,11-24**

15 Thu Lk 15.25-32
Blessed are they who put their trust in the Lord. Such a person is like a tree planted by the water: in a year of drought it is untroubled and never ceases to bear fruit. **Jr 17.7-10**

16 Fri Mt 21.33-39,42-43
Heal me, Lord, and I shall be healed; save me and I shall be saved, for you are my praise. **Jr 17.14-17**

17 Sat Mi 7.14-15,18-20
Peter asked Jesus, "How many times should I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "Not seven times, but seventy-seven times." **Mt 18.19-22**

18 SUN Ex 17.3-7
Jesus said: Anyone who drinks the water I give will never be thirsty again. The water I give them will become a spring of water within them, welling up to eternal life. **Jn 4.5-14**

19 Mon Jn 4.14-26
The Lord says: When you seek me, you shall find me, for you will seek me with all your heart. **Jr 29.11-14**

20 Tue Dn 3.25-43
Jesus said: My food is to do the will of the One who sent me and to complete his work. **Jn 4.27-42**

March

21 Wed Jn 4.43-54
Let us strive to know the Lord; that he will come is as certain as the dawn. He will come to us like the rain of springtime upon the earth. **Hos 6.1-6**

22 Thu Lk 11.14-20
The Lord says: Listen to my voice; I will be your God and you will be my people. **Jr 7.23-26a**

23 Fri Hos 14.2-5a
Jesus said: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength. Love your neighbour as yourself. **Mk 12.28-34**

24 Sat Is 7.10-15
Mary said to the angel: I am the Lord's servant, let it happen to me as you have said. **Lk 1.26-38**

25 SUN Ep 5.8-14
Jesus said to his disciples: We must do the work of the one who sent me, while the daylight lasts. The night is coming, no one can work then. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world. **Jn 9.1-12**

26 Mon Jn 9.13-17
The Lord says: See, I am going to create new heavens and a new earth. Be filled with rejoicing for ever, for I am creating my people to be gladness. **Is 65.17-19**

27 Tue Jn 9.18-23
Jeremiah said: The word of the Lord has brought insult and derision upon me. And so I said to myself, "I shall not think about him, I shall no longer speak in his name." But there seemed to be a burning fire in my heart, which I could not contain. **Jr 20.7-9**

28 Wed Jn 9.24-39
The Lord says: My people will not go hungry or thirsty, for the one who has compassion on them will be with them, guiding them to springs of water. **Is 49.8-10**

29 Thu Jn 5.31-38
Jeremiah said: You know me, Lord, and you see me. You know that my heart is with you. **Jr 12.1-3a**

30 Fri Ws 2.1-20
Jesus said: If anyone is prepared to do God's will they will discover whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. **Jn 7.1-2,14-30**

31 Sat Jn 7.40-53
The Lord says: I shall put my law deep within them, I shall write it on their hearts. I shall be their God and they will be my people. **Jr 31.31-34**

Meditating on the Word

April

These short readings, taken from the midday prayer in Taizé, can be read several times during the day. The references indicate longer readings. If you have time to read one, the one in bold is suggested.

Johannine hours

Psalm 98

Johannine hours are suggested as a way of seeking God in silence and prayer, in the midst of our life at home. During the course of the day take a couple of hours to read the Bible passage with the short commentary and to reflect on the questions which follow. Afterwards, the group (3 to 10 people) meet together to share what they have discovered and perhaps for a time of prayer.

1 SUN

Ezk 37.12-14
Jesus said to Martha: I am the resurrection. The one who believes in me shall live, even though he dies. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.

Jn 11.1-45

2 Mon

Is 42.1-4
Jesus said to the woman who had been brought before him: "Where are those who were accusing you? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir", she said. "Neither do I condemn you," said Jesus, "Go, and sin no more."

Jn 8.1-11

3 Tue

Jn 8.25-30
The Lord says to his servant: I have called you in righteousness. I will take you by the hand and shape you. I will make you a light to the nations.

Is 42.5-7

4 Wed

Is 49.1-6
Jesus said: If you make my word your home, you will indeed be my disciples. You will come to know the truth and the truth will set you free.

Jn 8.31-36

5 Thu

Jn 8.51-59
The Lord is coming to my help. Who then can condemn me?

Is 50.8-10

6 Fri

Jn 10.31-39
The servant of the Lord bore our suffering. We have been healed by his wounds.

Is 53.1-5

7 Sat

Jn 11.49-56
The Lord says: I shall make a covenant of peace with my people, and it will be an eternal covenant. I shall set my sanctuary among them for ever.

Ezk 37.26-28

8 SUN

Is 50.4-7
Ph 2.6-11
PALM SUNDAY
The crowds who went in front of Jesus and those who followed were all shouting: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who is coming in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Mt 21.1-11

9 Mon

Mt 26.47-56
Jesus prayed: My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass me by. Yet not as I will, but as you will.

Mt 26.30-46

10 Tue

Mk 14.53-72
Jesus said: Watch and pray, so as not to fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but human nature is weak.

Mk 14.10-52

11 Wed

Lk 23.1-12
The criminal said to Jesus, "Remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answered him, "In truth I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Lk 23.26-46

12 Thu

Lk 22.7-23
Jn 13.1-15
Paul writes: I received from the Lord what I passed on to you. Whenever you eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord, you are proclaiming his death until he comes.

1 Co 11.23-26

13 Fri

Jn 18.28-40
GOOD FRIDAY
Pilate handed Jesus over to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and, carrying his own cross, he went out of the city to the place known as Golgotha where they crucified him.

Jn 19.1-37

14 Sat

Jb 19.25-26
Mt 27.62-66
Christ was put to death in the body and raised to life in the Spirit. And in the Spirit he also went to announce the Gospel to those who once had refused to believe.

1 P 3.18-22

15 SUN

Col 3.1-4
Lk 24.13-32
EASTER DAY
When Jesus' disciple entered the empty tomb, he saw and believed.

Jn 20.1-9

16 Mon

Ac 2.14,22-28
Having recognized the Risen Christ, the disciples at Emmaus set out that moment and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven who said to them, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon."

Lk 24.33-48

17 Tue

Ac 2.36-41
Jesus said to his disciples: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Mt 28.1-20

18 Wed

Ac 3.1-10
The Risen Christ said to the disciples: Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.

Jn 20.19-23

19 Thu

Jn 21.4-14
Ac 3.11-21
Jesus Christ is the first-born from among the dead. He loves us and has freed us from our sins.

Rv 1.5

20 Fri

Mk 16.1-8
Christ, the stone the builders rejected, has become the cornerstone.

Ac 4.1-12

21 Sat

Ac 4.13-21
The Risen Christ said to Mary of Magdala: Go and find my brothers and tell them: I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.

Jn 20.11-18

22 SUN

Ac 2.42-47
Jesus said to Thomas: You believe because you can see me. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.

Jn 20.24-31

23 Mon

Jn 3.1-8
In his great mercy, God has given us new birth into a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

1 P 1.1-5

24 Tue

Jn 3.7-15
Though you have not seen Christ Jesus, you love him.

1 P 1.6-9

25 Wed

1 P 5.5-14
St MARK
Jesus sent out his disciples, saying: Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation.

Mk 16.15-20

26 Thu

1 P 1.13-16
The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life.

Jn 3.31-36a

27 Fri

Jn 6.1-15
Through Christ you now have faith in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory for this very purpose — that your faith and hope should be in God.

1 P 1.18-21

28 Sat

1 P 1.22-25
At the empty tomb, the women were met by two angels who said, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?"

Lk 24.1-12

29 SUN

Ac 2.14,22-33
When he was at table with two disciples, the Risen Christ took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread and began to give it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

Lk 24.24-31

30 Mon

Jn 6.22-29
All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but they shared everything they had.

Ac 4.32-37

If the basic vocation of human beings is to praise God, it is nonetheless true that very few of our songs are fit for this praise. The reality of our human condition, with its load of disappointments and impossibilities, weighs us down and wears us out. Where can a source of renewal be found which would enable us to hope again and again?

The answer of ancient Israel to this question was: by recalling the "marvels" of God, the deeds by which he showed his love by saving his people from death... Through the exodus from Egypt, through the return from captivity in Babylon, God revealed his faithful love for his people in the sight of all the nations. And so the psalmist can invite the whole of creation to sing a new song, a hymn of thanksgiving for the presence and activity of God at the heart of his creation.

For the Christian, this vision of reality finds a fulfillment in the coming — and especially in the resurrection — of our Lord Jesus Christ. By sending his Son into the world and by saving him from the power of death, God "judges the world with justice", in other words he makes clearly visible, in the midst of our world, his love and all the consequences that it entails. This "judgment" is neither a definitive condemnation nor an impossible ideal made into a law: it becomes a concrete reality for us in the gift of the Holy Spirit "without limit" (cf. John 3.34). All are thus offered an inward re-creation which gives a new way of looking at events. In this way, all people can praise the Lord in a fitting way; from their "new hearts" will rise up a song that is truly new because it constantly overcomes the downward pull of evil.

● By what "marvels" does God reveal his love and justice today? What enables us to live in constant gratefulness, to keep a "new song" alive in our hearts?